United Nations S/2018/169

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 28 February 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you the attached letter from the Syrian Negotiation Commission, transmitting a letter from revolutionary factions and civil groups on the ground in eastern Ghutah regarding their full commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) (see annex).

I would be most grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jonathan **Allen**

18-03398 (E) 080318

Please recycle

Annex to letter dated 28 February 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Syrian Negotiation Commission, it is my honour to transmit to you the following letter from revolutionary factions and civil groups on the ground in eastern Ghutah regarding their full commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018). The letter is signed by Jaysh al-Islam (Army of Islam), Faylaq al-Rahman (Rahman Corps), Ahrar al-Sham and civil activist groups in eastern Ghutah.

(*Signed*) Nasr **Al-Hariri**
President of the Syrian Negotiation Commission

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic]

Further to a meeting of representatives of Jaysh al-Islam (Army of Islam), Faylaq al-Rahman (Rahman Corps), Ahrar al-Sham, and civil activist groups in the eastern Ghutah, we should like to transmit the following information:

The Free Syrian Army factions have always been concerned for the safety of civilians in the eastern Ghutah. Accordingly, they have repeatedly insisted on complete respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law and a full commitment to the rules of engagement set forth in the Geneva Conventions and the two Protocols additional thereto. The Assad regime and its Russian and Iranian allies have repeatedly violated those provisions, not to mention deliberately contravening the Security Council resolutions concerning the situation in Syria. In particular, they have carried out indiscriminate and deliberate military operations against civilian targets. We are committed to the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 2401 (2018), which provides for an immediate ceasefire throughout Syria so that United Nations agencies can deploy urgent assistance convoys to our civilians who, for the last six years, have been besieged in the Ghutah to the east of Damascus city. We hereby declare that the undersigned factions are committed to the effective and genuine implementation of Security Council resolutions 2254 (2015), 2268 (2016) and 2401 (2018). In this regard, we also wish to make the following points:

- We are fully committed to expelling from the eastern Ghutah all elements of the Levant Liberation Organization, the Nusrah Front and Al-Qaida and anyone who belongs to those groups within 15 days of the ceasefire entering into force, in accordance with a mechanism to be agreed in the same period and acting in cooperation with the office of the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria.

- We are committed to ensuring that the necessary environment exists so that the relevant United Nations agencies can facilitate aid and medical convoys to the sick and wounded. We are also committed to protecting the convoys and ensuring the safety of their personnel across the eastern Ghutah.

We stress that we are fully committed to facilitating the work of the relevant United Nations agencies in monitoring implementation of Security Council resolution 2401 (2018). We wish to inform you that despite our commitment to the resolution, the latter is being violated by the regime, its Russian and Iranian allies and its allied militias. We therefore call on the United Nations and its agencies to compel the regime and its allies to take the following actions:

(a) Genuinely cease all hostilities and military operations, irrespective of the weapons used, and bring an end to regime and Russian Federation air force operations in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2254 (2015), 2268 (2016) and 2401 (2018);

(b) Grant secure access to relief convoys, bring an end to attacks on ambulances, and ensure the protection of medical personnel bearing the appropriate emblem;

(c) Allow the evacuation of patients and injured persons in critical condition; ensure that, in the care and under the supervision of the International Committee of the Red Cross, they can reach hospitals in neighbouring countries or areas outside regime control; and, if they are treated in a hospital in Damascus, ensure they are not threatened, detained or imprisoned, and that those accompanying them are not imprisoned;

(d) Stop targeting civilians, educational and medical facilities, places of worship, food warehouses, electrical plants, power stations, water desalination plants or any other vital facilities;

(e) Organize the secure, continuous, regulated and regular delivery of medical and food supplies consistent with the population size of the Ghutah to the east of Damascus, namely some 400,000 people, through crossings supervised by the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. For that purpose, Free Syrian Army factions have designated the following safe corridors: (1) the Wafidin camp, (2) Harasta and (3) Malihah Jisrayn;

(f) Allow United Nations entities and agencies to enter and operate in the eastern Ghutah under the supervision of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

We further declare that we are prepared to work with the United Nations Special Envoy, or with any other party designated by the Secretary-General or the Security Council for that purpose, to discuss the necessary mechanisms with a view to guaranteeing that Security Council resolution 2401 (2018) is immediately implemented and that the obligations enshrined in international law are fulfilled.

(*Signed*):

Army of Islam
Rahman Corps
Ahrar Al-Sham
Civil activist groups in the eastern Ghutah